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OUR PART IN FEEDING THE NATION.

(Special Information Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.)

SIRUPS AND HONEY BY PARCEL POST.



These Containers Can Carry Sirups and Honey in the Mails Long Distances, the Bureau of Markets Learned.

Liquid Sweets Went 654 Miles by Mail.

That Was Average Distance in Experimental Shipments by Department of Agriculture—Success with Parcel Post Requires High-Grade Products—The Best Containers.

Producers and consumers may find it to their advantage to use the parcel post for marketing sirups and extracted honey, according to a statement from the Bureau of Markets, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Experimental shipments of maple, cane, and sorghum sirups, and extracted honey, made from many parts of the country over many different mail routes, have shown the possibilities of marketing these products by parcel post. A total of 394 trial shipments were made over distances averaging 654 miles, a much greater distance, it is pointed out, than sirups are likely to be sent by mail. Of these shipments only three showed any material loss of contents because of seepage or leakage and this was due to unusually rough handling.

Two types of tin containers were found satisfactory for parcel post shipments of sirups and honey. Both types have screw caps and are provided with outer cartons of corrugated paperboard. The screw caps contain snugly fitting pieces of cork that cover the opening in the cans when the screw caps are properly closed. As a protection to the screw caps, squares of corrugated paperboard are placed on top of the cans beside the screw caps. Such packages properly wrapped and securely tied, marked "fragile" as required by the postal regulations for packages containing liquids, will carry without danger of leakage in the mails.

While the cost of containers is high at the present time, there are doubtless many cases in which parcel post marketing would be desirable and economical, as sirups and extracted honey are good substitutes for sugar. Suggestions on obtaining customers and conducting business with them by parcel post may be found in Farmers' Bulletin 922, "Parcel Post Business Methods."

In order to retain customers, say the specialists, it is necessary that only high-grade products be shipped, as the principal incentive to buying by parcel post is to obtain products of high quality. Persons desiring further particulars in regard to shipping sirups and extracted honey by parcel post may apply to the Bureau of Markets, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

CARE MAKES BEES EFFICIENT.

Because of lack of attention fully half the bees now kept in the United States are virtually useless to their owners and consequently beekeeping is often condemned as unprofitable. Probably in an average season for the United States as a whole the surplus honey obtained by good beekeepers scarcely will exceed 50 pounds to the colony. Assuming that 400 pounds is the average needed by a hive to maintain its existence during the year, this 50 pounds surplus represents then only one-ninth of the nectar gathered by the bees. In such an average season an apiary of 100 colonies may gather nectar equivalent to 22½ tons of honey where the "honey crop" or surplus honey will be only 2½ tons. That 100 colonies of bees can find nectar sufficient to make 22½ tons of honey within

a range of about two miles gives some idea of the amount of sugar available in the form of nectar. This amount doubtless is much below the actual sugar at hand, for when nectar is flowing freely bees do not get it all. Furthermore, in many places more than 50 pounds of surplus is obtained and often more than 100 colonies can be kept profitably in one place.

In the face of these facts it is regrettable to find so many beekeepers who fail to get even the small percentage which belongs to the beekeeper. There are parts of the United States where 90 per cent of all colonies of bees are in hollow logs or plain square boxes in which combs of bees can not be handled. There are few parts of the

HOW FARMERS ARE COOPERATING.

Farmers' cooperative purchasing and marketing associations now number about 14,000 with about two million members and do an annual business estimated at one and one-half billion dollars. On the basis of the value of products handled the elevator associations lead, followed in order by fruit and produce organizations, and creameries and cheese factories.

country where the box hive is not found and probably one-third of all the bees in the country are so housed. In this case both equipment and management are poor and the energy of the bees is misdirected. Even of those who keep their bees in modern hives of movable frames the vast majority do not get the full crop. By failing to control swarming by providing insufficient room for storage or by lack of proper care in winter their crop is often reduced one-half or more.

COMMUNITY KITCHENS CANNED.

Community kitchens, where surplus vegetables and fruits are canned under cooperative arrangements, were operated last year in Ohio, Pleasants, Kanawha, Jefferson, and, to some extent, in other counties of West Virginia. The kitchens were supervised by the home demonstration agents of the extension division of the State University.

In the city of Charleston, where a kitchen was opened in July, the number who brought products to be canned increased from 56 women during the second week to several times that number in a short time.

Supplementing the work of the Charleston kitchen are about 15 volunteer women who, under the supervision of the home demonstration agent of Kanawha County, established temporary field kitchens in the rural communities, to which the women bring their surplus vegetables and fruits. The county agricultural agent and his assistants give active aid in connection with this work.

As a result of this effort, large quantities of food were conserved, much of which would otherwise have been wasted.

A MAN-SIZED WAR JOB FOR BOYS.

Boys who want to help their Nation win this war will devote their next school vacation to victory work on a farm, helping a farmer feed the fighters. Get in touch today with the U. S. Boys' Working Reserve, or your County Agent, or your State Agricultural College.